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REVIEW

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LENIN ANSWERS WENDELIN THOMAS

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RUSSIAN Bolshevism, like Italian Fascism and German Nazism, is a movement of national reform. Its historic program is the solution of the backwardness of Russia. By using the phraseology of socialism, it has enlisted in its national service workers and intellectuals all over the world. At the same time, it has foisted its peculiar methods and ideology (make-believe) on wide sections of working people in the advanced countries, helping to put over the job that up to 1919 was the special function of the social-democratic politicians—to stem the spread of socialist understanding among the propertyless of countries economically mature for a change to common ownership.

The Moscow trials and executions have tended to clear the vision of many non-Russian dupes of the Bolshevik State. But precisely because current Bolshevik "justice" plays up Trotsky and "Trotskyism" as its chief subject, an opportunity is offered to the exiled Soviet Clemenceau to continue the Bolshevik swindle in a new form.

Politically Trotsky and Trotskyism stand or fall on the Lenin-Trotskyist record of 1918-1923. All of Trotsky's wisdom must be perforce be based on the exaltation of the past of Bolshevism and on the glorification of the old "top" as compared to the present set of Soviet bosses. He must not only prove himself to be a good Leninist—in defence against accusations by the present rulers of the USSR—but he must prove Bolshevism to be good and without blemish.

He therefore answers Wendelin Thomas — who asked if the opportunist sanctification of falsehood and treachery "for the party's sake" was not, even before 1936, an essential feature of Bolshevik theory and practice—by means of perfumed, sugared evasions and untruths. Trotsky does not tell the truth because he cannot help himself. He would be condemning his past if he told the truth of the matter. Because Trotsky cannot tell the truth, we shall let the record of history and Father Lenin himself answer Wendelin Thomas. In the first place, there is the question of Kronstadt. In his reply to Thomas, Trotsky wrote:

"The best, most sacrificing sailors were completely withdrawn from Kronstadt and played an important role at the fronts and in the local Soviets throughout the country. What remained was the gray mass with big pretensions ("We are from Kronstadt"), but without political education and unprepared for revolutionary sacrifice. The country was starving. The Kronstadters demanded privileges. The uprising was dictated by a desire to get privileged food rations. The sailors had cannon and battleships. All the reactionary elements, in Russia as well as abroad, immediately seized upon this uprising. The white emigrés demanded aid for the insurrectionists. The victory of this uprising could bring nothing but a victory of counter-revolution, entirely independent of the ideas the sailors had in their heads. But the ideas themselves were deeply reactionary. They reflected the hostility of the backward peasantry to the worker, the conceit of the soldier or sailor in relation to the "civilian" Petersburg, the hatred of the petty bourgeois for revolutionary

discipline. The movement therefore had a counter-revolutionary character and since the insurgents took possession of the arms in the forts they could only be crushed with the aid of arms."

The recorded facts throw back the lie into the Soviet Clemenceau's teeth.

1. The so-called Kronstadt rebellion was preceded by a *general strike of the workers of Petrograd*, with the result that martial law was proclaimed by the Bolshevik State on the 27th of February.

In the rebellion — according to Trotsky's own statement (quoted by Smilga)—30% of the Communists among the sailors participated actively in the insurrection, 40% declared themselves neutral and only 30% expressed their opposition to the insurrection.

2. At the 10th Congress of the Bolshevik Party held in March 1921, Zinoviev, reporting to the assembly, declared that if a peasant congress were called at that time, the majority of the delegates would support the anti-Bolshevik parties.

But at the same get-together of the new bosses, Boukharine stated: "At the time when we must exact the greatest application from the proletariat, the conference of the leather workers in Moscow as well as the conference of the non-party metal workers adopt a resolution of the Social-revolutionaries. Here (that is, in the workers) resides the danger."

The third reporter to the Congress—Trotsky himself—took the occasion to develop the thesis that the Bolshevik Party had the right to maintain its dictatorship "even in the case when this dictatorship clashes temporarily with the transitory state of mind of the worker democracy."

It is evident that he who is trying to make people believe that the Kronstadt rebellion "reflected the hostility of the backward peasantry, to the worker, the conceit of the soldier or sailor in relation to the 'civilian' Petersburg" is not telling the truth. It was not in reflection to such an outlook that the workers struck in Petrograd immediately before the uprising and the advanced, unionized, workers expressed in resolutions their open opposition to the new, Bolshevik, bosses and that the Communists among the sailors supported for the most part the heroic gesture of March 1921.

Now that we know who were the revolting sailors, let us see what they wanted. We learn from the resolution they passed at their meeting of March 1, 1921, that they wanted the following:

1. Freely elected Soviets chosen by secret ballot.
2. Freedom of assembly and speech.
3. The right to free organization (free trade unions, the right to form political bodies, as parties, etc.)
4. The right of the peasants to have their unions.
5. The liberation of political prisoners.
6. The liquidation of the oppressive "political sections."
7. The suppression of the police lines set up by the Bolsheviks to stop the city population from seeking food in the countryside.
8. The right of the peasants to their land.

That is what Trotsky, not very truthfully (!), tries to represent as the "demand for privileges" and the desire to get "privileged food rations." All who were in Russia from 1918 to 1923 know who got privileged rations. When the Russian workers and peasants were starving, the big and little Trotskys, Lenins, Zinovievs, Stalins, Voroshilovs and their entourage gorged themselves on the best the land could offer. The ambitious

"revolutionary" politicians had "arrived," and they were—the best of them—quite cynical about the consumption of luxuries in the time of famine.) It is the unionized workers of Petrograd and the red sailors of Kronstadt (and the advanced workers of Moscow, who also wanted none of him and his pals) that Trotsky calls a "gray mass with big pretensions." Pretensions to what? The pretension to dispose of one's life, the pretension to liberty? Indeed, how did the low-down workers and sailors dare to raise their heads against their new bosses, the possessors of the only political truth, the professional politicians who had ridden into the position of power on the back of the Russian Revolution? According to Goebbels, Stalin and Trotsky, workers become egregiously "petty bourgeois" whenever they object to the totalitarian (Bolshevik or Nazi) swindle.

In a typical leftist intellectual's attempt to excuse a fellow "revolutionary" scribbler, Victor Serge writes that the demands of the workers and sailors of Petrograd and Kronstadt were especially out of place because Pilsudski was then preparing to throw his armies against the Ukraine (*Révolution Proletarienne*, September 10, 1937). The "left-of-the-left" scribbler, too, fails to tell the truth. *The Russo-Polish War took place in 1920. The Kronstadt rebellion was provoked later, in March 1921.*

Indeed, "all the reactionary elements, in Russia as well as abroad immediately seized upon this uprising." Did they not seize on the very similarly provoked Barcelona May Days? Do not such elements seize on the counter-accusations hurled by Trotsky against Stalin's "anti-Trotskyist-Gestapo" campaign of slander and extermination? Kerensky also warned against playing into the arms of "reaction."

The institution of political democracy for the workers and peasants would have handed over the country to reaction! That was and is the position of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini, Kemal Pasha and Franco.

We take the stand of Marx and Engels. For us, the opposite of reaction—social progress, socialism—lies by the way of the utmost of popular rule. We understand how a person who together with the rest of Bolshevism falsifies Marx and Engels by representing the bloody "iron-heel" dictatorship of a clique of professional politicians as the Marxist conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat—finds "reaction" in the demand of the Kronstadt sailors for political freedom.

And did the sailors' economic demands spell reaction? Reaction from what? The Russian people revived when the economic measures recommended by the "backward" sailors (seconded by the Petrograd and Moscow unionized workers) were finally applied. Why did the great Father Lenin, to whom you and your kind falsely attribute the wisdom of the Nep, refuse to permit the lifting of the arbitrary police conditions that crushed the economic life of the country? Who was right, the great embalmed undertaker Lenin, in whose name you Trotsky are now trying to retrieve your political fortunes—or the starving workers and peasants who dared to object to the new slavery?

The Kronstadt sailors were easily defeated by the forces under the command of Tukhachevsky, Voroshilov and Dybenko, and directly officered by your Tsarist subalterns, and acting under the general supervision of you, comrade Trotsky. They were easily defeated because they hesitated to fire on the city of Petrograd. Their act was a protest—a strike—rather than an insurrection. The sailors were ready to negotiate with the dictators.

You, Trotsky, with the rest of your Central Committee, refused the mediation offered by the sailors. You wanted to teach the "gray mass" a lesson. A lesson like the one taught to it in Paris in 1871.

Did you not know, then that the statement of Zinoviev to the effect that "the white general Kozlovski had seized Kronstadt and was at the head of the sailors" was a typical Bolshevik "amalgam" (not a whit different from the current creations by Yezhov and Vyshinsky)? Why did you not brand the lie as such? Does this not mean that you and your pals believed that "falsehood, treachery, betrayal are permissible and justified if they lead to 'the end'"—the retention of power by your clique?

The sailors did not want to fire toward the city. After you won your military victory, why did you order the consequent wholesale massacre of the disarmed sailors? Did you not risk then comparison with the earlier Gallifet?

NOW A WORD about your sad attempt to distinguish Stalinism from Leninism-Bolshevism.

You wrote to Thomas: "Your attempt to conclude that Stalin's forgeries flow from the 'amoralism' of the Bolsheviks is basically false." By "amoralism," I suppose, Thomas meant behavior like Zinoviev's concoction of the General Kozlov story, and in general, the theory that the "end justifies the means." The "end" of socialism cannot be served by such means as deception, wholesale butchery of disarmed workers and sailors, hoaxes like Zinoviev's, hypocrisy, forgeries, Stalinist "amalgams." That is because socialism can only be the conscious and intelligent creation of great numbers. More and more of us are beginning to recognize that neither your nor Lenin's position has anything to do with Marx's insistence on the need of a general socialist understanding. The latter cannot be aided by fooling the masses, by falsehood, trickery and forgeries. Your efforts to pin wings to Father Lenin's shoulders and thus justify yourself are defeated by the record of history.

Let Lenin testify if he himself did not consider falsehood, trickery, political "amalgams," to be appropriate means to his "end"—having his set of professional politicians stay in power.

The following note was written by Lenin on May 15, 1932. It was addressed to D. I. Kursky, who was Commissar of Justice at that time. It was written in reference to one of the articles of the Soviet Criminal Code under consideration in May 1922. At that time the Trial of the Social-Revolutionaries was in preparation. The trial took place the following month. It will be hard for you, Trotsky, to deny that this trial was the precursor of the political demonstration trials that Stalin perfected a decade later.

15 May [1922]
Com[rade] Kursky;

In my opinion it is necessary to extend the application of execution by shooting (with the substitution of ex[ile] abr[oad] see Art. 1 below) to all phases covering the activities of Mensh[eviks], S[ocial] R[evolutionaries] and the like; a formula must be found that would place these activities in connection with the international bourgeoisie and its struggle against us (bribery of the press and agents, war preparations and the like).

Please return this quickly with your reply.

Lenin

This note was first published in the *Bolshevik* (Moscow), issue of January 15, 1937, page 63—just before the trial of the 17 (Radek, Sokolnikov et al). It was accompanied by the following comment by the savants of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute:

The note to comrade Kursky was written by Vladimir Ilyich on the reverse side of the first page, presented to him in printed form, of the project for the supplementary law in the Criminal Code. Next to paragraph 5 of the law, which dealt with the application of capital punishment for counter-

revolutionary expressions against the Soviet (Bolshevik) government, Lenin wrote on the first page, below: "Add the right to substitute for execution exile abroad, by decision of the All-Russian C.E.C. (for a period of years or without limit." It was this postscript that Lenin had in mind in reference to the note to Kursky above.

The note to Kursky emphasized the need for capital punishment for the counter-revolutionary activities of Mensheviks, S-Rs and "the like." Lenin demanded capital punishment for the counter-revolutionary activities of anti-Soviet parties, connected with the war preparations of the international bourgeoisie against the Soviet republic and with other forms of the fight of international capitalism against our country. That demand of Lenin's is likewise entirely applicable to the Trotskyist-Zinovievist agents of the Gestapo who acted by direct orders of fascism and are a counter-revolutionary gang of bandits, spies and diversionists, vicious enemies of the land of toilers. These scoundrels, murderers of Comrade Kirov, are precisely such enemies of the Soviet republic for whom Vladimir Ilyich demanded severe revolutionary punishment.

And some very interesting pages could be written about Lenin's and your bloody extirpation of the "worker opposition" within the Bolshevik Party.

The medievalistic international corporation with its center in the Vatican City combats the rival organization with a center in Moscow especially because both compete for the dumb faith and unreasoning loyalty of millions of hearts and minds all over the earth. The "racially" restricted Hitlerite Bolshevism sitting on the top of present-day Germany thunders against the "international menace" of Russian Stalinist Bolshevism; but we recognize this to be a convenient comedy cynically played in the general imperialist game by the "professional revolutionists" who have become the masters of the German people. The animosity borne by these two organizations against the Moscow set must not fool us into mistaking the latter for their opposite. We are not dealing here with "opposites" but with different, rival ideological forces, which are at the same time similar. We who want to accelerate the development of a movement for socialism must combat the medievalist obscurantism of the Vatican International. We must combat the racist demagoguery of the Nazi bureaucratic apparatus. We must for similar reasons combat the pretensions of Leninist Bolshevism—both the official, Stalinist, and the oppositionist, Trotskyist, kind—especially because Bolshevism is the adaptation of the language of Marxism to suit a program that serves objectively the continuation of capitalism on the face of the globe. Besides representing directly the interests of important sections of economically privileged persons, the three mentioned political organizations do their utmost to instill in their dupes an unthinking obedience to its directives and the belief in the infallibility of the self-perpetuating leaders. These methods, this practice, these theories of social behavior, the movement for socialism must attack intransigently—for the paramount reason that our emancipation, the replacement of the present system of wage labor with a system of common ownership and democratic control of the means of production, depends on the intelligent political awareness, on the self-conscious action, of great numbers.

In order to aid the spread of socialist understanding among the workers of the world, we must show up the historic forgery you Trotsky perpetrate when you attempt to put yourself together with Marx and Engels, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Your crafty answers to Wendelin Thomas place you plump in the camp of Bolshevism, a movement of national reform that is sister to German Nazism and Italian Fascism, and which bears in its practice and methods the mark of bourgeois revolutionism. This task is as important to the movement for socialism as is exposing Stalinist "justice."

THE POWERS' WAY OUT FOR SPAIN

• Roberto

THE EXCITEMENT over the Nyons "piracy" resolution has subsided. At the time that this is being written, the representatives of the great European powers are getting set for another round of make-believe about Spain. Non-intervention (spelling "intervention,") will again be discussed by the ablest manipulators of circumlocution in Europe. Everybody present will agree that the situation is serious. Then the same game will be continued in *one form or another*. For even a possible compromise between the Loyalist Government and Franco through the mediation of Eden, Grandi, Delbos and Litvinov can be no more than a continuation of the old farce.

We are asked two questions:

1. How long can this situation go on?
2. Do not England and France see the danger inherent in the protraction of the civil war in Spain? Don't they see the danger offered them by a Franco victory?

The first question is usually answered with: "Till the next World War," and that is expected to break out in earnest, at the latest, by 1940.

If the first question has the significance of an interjection expressing hopeless impatience, the second query expresses a certain widely spread mistaken notion.

It is not the victory of Franco that offers a danger to England and France, but the victory of a Franco dominated by the imperialist rivals of France and England.

Spain is not the central point over which the powers are playing their game of diplomatic deceit. Spain is important in so far as it affects the game of advantages being played over a much larger stake on the green tables of Europe.

There are two sets of capitalist powers in the world arena: the Haves and the Have-nots. There are the powers like France, England, Russia, which have at the disposal of their national economies capital for investment, which own or control extensive sources of cheap raw material, which control active and potential outlets for the profitable disposal of their products. Facing them are States representing national economies that do not possess enough of these assets.

Is not then the line-up forming in preparation for the next European War that of democratic versus non-democratic powers? In a way, these are the sides. We have seen the traditional political super-structure of capitalism being modified and replaced—by popular demand—with "totalitarian" forms of government in the countries where the economic process met with special difficulties, largely as a result of the lack of the mentioned good things. The Have-not powers—the present "aggressive" powers—are therefore at the same time more or less "non-democratic." (Note how the resulting international political reshuffling, with its new alignments, has influenced another child of a national economic breakdown, the Soviet State, to do its utmost to assume, at least, the semblance — a cardboard mask — of political democracy).

The bureaucracies that hold Germany and Italy in their grip are driven to aggressive gestures in the world arena:

1. By the need of proving themselves to their people, who lifted them into power on the promises of national aggrandizement and national economic amelioration.

2. By the need of grasping at all opportunities to better their economic and military position in the world market.

In the preliminary, semi-diplomatic jockeying, the have-not powers join hands. But the present alignments will not necessarily survive unchanged when a general European War breaks out in the open.

On the other side, stand the "peace-loving" States: England, France, Russia. They do not want to have the status quo of Europe disturbed. They have much to lose and little to gain in a war. Even their victory will oblige them to revise drastically the arrangements established by the Versailles Treaty. While it is already evident that the French and British governments will have their peoples solidly behind them in the impending conflict, it is possible that the consequent, post-war, reaction from the slogan of anti-fascism that is glorified now as the ideological issue of the next war may bring in its wake a genuine socialist movement, which will refuse to be taken in tow by the typical reformers of capitalism and will actually threaten the existing system.

The third great "peace-lover," the USSR, especially fears a war because a war will put its top-heavy structure to a test which the Soviet masters themselves doubt it can stand. The Soviet masters have on hand inexhaustible raw material, a plethora of cheap labor-power, a colonial empire in the shape of many millions of peasants, to whom the Russian State manufacturer and merchant sells dear and from whom it buys cheap under advantageous monopolist conditions. The Soviet masters want to be let alone to develop the great natural resources of the country; to secure the sparsely settled outlying sections of their vast empire; to put their national economy on an efficient and profitable basis. The Soviet masters face immediately the solution of an important internal social problem: bridging the gap between complete State ownership and the efficient management of industry. (And it is very doubtful if a complete, rigorous State-capitalism can be run efficiently.) To accomplish this task the Soviet State needs to sweep out as fast as possible the attitudes and popular ideals—the ideological vestiges—of the March and October revolutions. This can only bring trouble when tried in a war situation. (That is why the executioners work overtime in the USSR today.) The biggest war danger facing the USSR lies in the radical disproportion between the up-to-date, mechanized Soviet military machine and its economic base, the wasteful, slowly functioning economic structure that moves fast only at orders relayed through a bureaucratic hierarchy. The demands of that great modernized military machine on an economy which performs well only under the executioner's pistol will bring collapse if these demands are accentuated by a long war. A nationalist revolution in the Ukraine—motivated by the divergence of the interests of that largely peasant region and those of Moscow—is already being prepared (against the USSR and Poland) by the Nazi experts.

Having so much to lose in the event of a general conflict, the "peace-loving" States offer one concession after another to the aggressive have-not powers, who are bold in their demands because they know concessions will be made. Yet none of them wants an actual conflict right now.

It is common knowledge that Italy and Germany have been selling, for credit and cash, active support to the Spanish rebels. Everybody knows that the Soviet Union sells armaments of one kind or another to the so-called Loyalist government, and that France and Great Britain, the two great pillars of political democracy in Europe, while not sympathetic to the fascist-backed rebellion, do their utmost to keep the Spanish civil war from

spreading into a general European war. Again and again liberal opinion has represented France and Great Britain as losing patience with the bad fascist powers and throwing their influence, and thus victory, to the rightful Republican government of Spain. Again and again liberal thought is disappointed.

What is happening here?

It is true that up to recently Franco's operations were principally guided and heavily manned by Italian Fascism.

The Nazis lent a hand: 1.—to trade their expert and technical aid for Spanish raw material of importance in the manufacture of arms; 2.—to snatch at certain strategic values they could trade for other advantages in the present haggling with France and England; 3.—To use the Spanish battlefields, like several other powers, as a fine proving ground for arms and technicians. The role of the Nazis in the Spanish civil war was limited by the distance from Germany, but especially by the objections of the German General Staff. It is most important to note that the Spanish adventure is a thing of fringe importance to the Nazis. Their chief interest lies in the Danube region. The program of economic and geographic expansion must follow, and follows in fact, the basic lines of Bismarck's program for the reconstitution of the post-medieval German (Holy Roman) Empire. The Nazi program of expansion amounts to an attempt to put together the shattered Austrian Empire and to join it to Germany under National Socialist rule. This can be accomplished only in alliance with Great Britain against Russia or with Russia against Great Britain. Nazi Germany put a finger into the Spanish mess to find there loose strings that could be tied to its chief political purpose.

Mussolini's invasion of Spain was, however, a natural step in the expansion of Italian capitalism. The rise of Fascism is in itself a phase and instrument of this expansion.

The present contest between Great Britain and Italy (and France and Italy) began in 1919. The ambition of Italian capitalism to go big on the world market first bumped into France, which, holding Tunis and Algeria, patrols the "Roman" Mediterranean along the west and south coasts of Italy. In back of France stood Britain, the chief opponent of the ambitious Italian capitalism. After Stresa it became clear to Mussolini that the struggle had to be carried on openly against the British. He appeared to win the first round when he was allowed by France (Laval) to have his way in Ethiopia. This transpired with the approval of Stalin, who pointed out to Laval the imperative need of staving off a rapprochement between a disgruntled Italy and Nazi Germany.

Long before July 1936, Mussolini carried on negotiations with the Catalan patriots (now allies or members of the Communist organization in Barcelona). The revolt of the Spanish generals offered the Fascist government the hope of possessing itself of the western door to the Mediterranean. The power that holds Spain holds the Mediterranean. For a time Mussolini and his pals even dreamt of establishing in Spain a puppet State like Japanese Manchukuo, Soviet Mongolia, the British Irak and Mussolini's own Albania.

But neither did the British government—not the nice parliament in London but the Foreign and War Offices, the real holders of State power—object to the militarists' uprising in Spain. It is easy to believe the rumor according to which General Sanjurjo, who began flying from Portugal to Spain as the head of the rebellion, was fitted out by the British officials. Sanjurjo's accidental death, coupled with other circumstances, permitted the developing rebellion to pass under Italian patronage. From the viewpoint of the British investors, the first problem to be

solved was that presented by the gathering social discontent in Spain. That was reason enough for encouraging the generals, who began their operations with the idea of bringing to their fatherland the social peace that is Portugal's.

The consequent problem was saving the victorious Franco from Mussolini. Traditionally, the British State holds a protectorate over the Iberian peninsula. One expects even Franco, with his heavy commitments to Italy, to realize that it is easier to run his dictatorship with the goodwill of the British than as a troublesome fief from Mussolini, whose hold on Spain would be a challenge to England and France. It was hard enough to keep back the French Radicals from coming to the aid of their Spanish brothers. If Franco did not understand what was best for most everybody concerned, the scale might at least be balanced by permitting the Frenchmen to throw effective aid to the now reformed, purged Loyalist. Paradoxically, there can be no complete Loyalist collapse unless Franco shifts his foreign allegiance from Mussolini.

Meanwhile, Britain's huge armament program is rapidly progressing. Primed by the Fascist adventures in Ethiopia and Spain, the British people are now solidly behind their government in an eventual war for "democracy and against fascism." In Ethiopia the Italians remain almost penniless, occupied at the ceaseless task of pacification, bottled-up, surrounded by the British and their Saudi-Arabian allies on all sides. Italian intrigue in Yemen and Palestine is being checked in the typical British manner. The newest premier, the shrewd genius of the British war preparations, drops wise advice to France, which is militarily one country with England. He counsels kind words to Germany.

Great Britain, though closely allied to France (whose important position on the world market will undoubtedly be threatened by a Germany stretching over most of Central Europe), has no immediate quarrel with Germany. The direct interest of Hitlerite Germany is centered on Central and Eastern Europe. The historical needs of a capitalist Germany are opposed (Austria, Czechoslovakia) to those of a great Italy. The latter cannot survive as a major power with a strong German Empire—the reformed Central Europe—on its northern border. The British Foreign Office sees the present Nazi-Fascist cooperation, the Berlin-Rome axis, as a specious temporary alliance, which may be unmade by kindness wafted in Hitler's direction.

Therefore, France faces the difficult task of equating the differences existing between its (now vague) Soviet pact and the fact of the total fusion of the French war machine with that of Great Britain.

The State-monopolist capitalism of Russia is therefore all aflutter over the situation. It cannot have France without Great Britain. Can it win France and Britain as allies against Germany, or will it be obliged, in an attempt to save itself, to slip into an alliance with Nazi Germany (as the German General Staff would have it) against its old and eventual enemy, the British Empire? An understanding with Hitler's Germany would tear away much of the "proletarian" masquerade with which the Soviet State-monopolist capitalism now adorns itself. It would tend to lay bare one of the greatest swindles ever worked on the working people of the world. The ideological transformation called for by such an about-face would be found by Stalin's "engineers of the soul" more difficult a job than the change from the "third-period" r-r-revolutionary make-believe to the love of democracy that was made in 1934. To hold the French bourgeoisie as allies, Stalin must gain the goodwill of Great Britain, which dominates the political-military fortunes of France. The Spanish revolt of July 1936 nearly put State power in the

hands of the anti-capitalist radicals of Spain, and almost scared the French bourgeois out of the uncomplete French-Soviet pact. To save its French alliance, the USSR therefore entered the fray in Spain. It mobilized for that purpose its international staff. The latter became a power in Spain. It succeeded in isolating the Spanish extremists from the population — as a guarantee to Britain and France that the fear of revolution need not deter them from military cooperation with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of Greater Russia.

That does not mean to say that the defeat of the anti-capitalist radicals in Loyalist Spain is to be accounted primarily as a result of Russian intervention. The truth of the matter is rather that the Soviet influence found a ready soil in the preponderant peasant population of Spain, which became more of a factor as more of the people were drawn into the fray and the anti-Franco forces changed from the "revolutionary," proletarian composition they had in July to their present general, popular make-up. The program of the Communist Party of Spain and the basically bourgeois outlook of the predominantly peasant population of Spain coincided. The essentially anti-capitalist outlook of the F.A.I. is blotted out as an influence by the peasant numbers, who now man the Loyalist armies and find representation in the Negrin-C.P. State apparatus.

But something very similar has happened on the other side. Franco's forces are not at present mostly foreign Legionnaires, Moors and Italian conscripts. His armies also are now predominantly Spanish conscript armies, peasant armies. It will be very difficult for Franco and his fellows to continue the fight in behalf of a program calling for a return to the arrangement that existed under Primo de Rivera. The peasant revolution which began on July 19 will not be unmade even by Franco.

One might be tempted to say that these circumstances will facilitate the compromise that will most likely be proposed by Great Britain as soon as the position of the Loyalist forces becomes precarious. Unless the complete rout of the Loyalist forces comes soon—an armistice, a plebiscite, the scheme of a Spanish Free State and a Spanish Ulster, will be put on the order of the day. A compromise suggested by the British will meet with assent on the part of Germany and France. Then neither Italy nor Russia will dare to say no. For nobody wants war. And the British program of rearmament has pretty well passed the half-way mark.

But such a proposal will have to be posited on the eventuality of the marked exhaustion of one of the two sides in the Spanish civil war. Great Britain is willing to have the Spaniards fight on for another year or so, as long as the internal quarrel remains segregated and Russia and Italy stay out of Spain. The Communists have done their job. Defeat has been put in a uniform with brass buttons and made to salute the traditional way. Our deepest respect to the C.N.T.-F.A.I. and U.G.T. workers who stay till the last moment—to die fighting—after they have been misled and disarmed by their Stalino-Republican officers (Málaga, Bilbao, Santander and the Asturias), and after they have been described as talkative cowards by the Communist and bourgeois press of the world (Matthews, Hemingway and the Belgian Catholics)!

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FRANCE FACES A WORLD WAR

• L. Emery

THE MOST distinctive feature of the French political scene at this moment is its apparent "normalcy."

Immediately after February 6, 1936, people found it impossible to speak of the possibility of a civil war. On one side stood the quasi-military "fascist" leagues. Facing them were great numbers of working people, who seemed to find unity in action for anti-fascist defence. In appearance, here was the much talked of "trial of speed" between fascism and socialism, a race that was expected to reach an early end in the clash of decisive events.

It is evident today that such expectations did not correspond to reality. The politicians have returned to the slow-moving routine of the Parliament.

For the fascists it can be said that the Leagues never even thought of risking a trial of force. Even in the street fights their role was entirely defensive. No serious incidents occurred when by decree the Leagues were dissolved and prohibited. It is true that they then took on the guise of parties. The most important one, for example, became the French Social Party. But this transformation was not limited to a simple change of names. The former Leagues slipped into traditional electoral activity and legal propaganda—and not merely under the pressure of the law. The extent of this evolution to legality is illustrated by the more or less official relation existing at the present time between certain local administrations and the French Social Party. It is demonstrated by the efforts of the latter to be considered a "left centrist" party and by the fact that, in certain localities, this party has even lent support to Radical candidates, and sought to win, at the same time, the goodwill of both the democratic and conservative small bourgeoisie.

This return to moderation has been received with discontent by certain fascists, who are for violence at any price. Some of the former Croix de Guerre, the Royalists, the Francistes have formed secret groups for direct action, and are denouncing the softness and treachery of their leaders. But these are few, and their secret, terrorist activity is productive of nothing more serious than easy exercise for the police and subject-matter to writers of feuilleton fiction.

A similar change—on wider scale and at a faster rate—has taken place on the extreme left, where the fiery revolutionism of February 1936 appears to have vanished for good. The formation of the Front Populaire, the enormous development of the C.G.T., which in 1936 grouped 5 million workers, was interpreted by some people to stand for a mighty rise in the movement for socialism. The facts are the following. Included in the Popular Front, the Radical Party remained what it was—a bourgeois-nationalist party. The Socialist Party of France, made wise by its stay in power, powerless to solve the financial problem, lives on the credit of the reforms imposed by the May-June strikes of 1936. The Communist Party has entirely renounced its old doctrine. The great mass effort was ridden by these parties and brought safely to rest. The strikes of May-June 1936, which had provoked a veritable panic and mobilized a million and a half of workers, were terminated under conditions that were most favorable to the existing social order. The reactionary journalist M. de Kerillis has been able to thank

Stalin for this result. When the Blum ministry was overthrown by the Senate, there was the fear—or hope—of mass demonstrations, which had, in fact, been announced. But there were no demonstrations. Everything has devolved according to old consecrated precedents. Very curious is the present attitude of the C.G.T. It approves everything it fought against before: collective contracts, arbitration made obligatory by the means of legal sanctions, the rationalization of production, permanent collaboration with the existing political parties and governments. In 1906, at the Congress of Amiens, French trade-unionism declared that it wanted to "break legality, which stifles the workers." Today the trade-union federation calls for the "application of the law." There are, of course, elements that attempt to kick the traces: anarchists, Trotskyites, communist oppositionists, the "Revolutionary Left" of the Socialist Party of France, etc. But these minorities have a small influence. Not only does the government combat and persecute them. The leadership of the labor parties and of the C.G.T. shows these groups the utmost of hostility and denounces their extremism as the conscious or unconscious support of fascism. The mentioned minorities dispose of feeble material means. They run the danger of being fooled into terrorist and clandestine action and thus led into adventures that will no doubt be used against them.

If the equilibrium between the right bloc and left bloc—two formations that are, of course, not at all homogeneous—has been able to maintain itself without the spread of violence, it was especially due to the lack of boldness on the part of the leaders of both sides, who repeatedly recoiled from dangerous decisions. But this timidity, this moderation of the leaders, cannot be understood without recognizing the fact that the spirit of revolt is no longer general and ardent among their followers. In June 1936, the workers obtained certain advantages. Some of these, as the wage increases, are being annulled today by the rise of prices. Others, as the paid vacations and the 40-hours week, still remain effective. There is no doubt that the workers have thus gained a stronger feeling of "social dignity." The "successes" encouraged in the wage workers a feeling of satisfaction, which leads to patience. The political orientation of the peasants remains indefinite. In 1934 and 1935 they went through a period of great misery, which has been alleviated since then as a result of the rise of agricultural prices. Neither can big capitalism—in spite of certain appearances—complain about the present regime. As usual, it exercises a considerable influence over the State, especially through the upper brackets of the administration, which is manned by its people. The wave of strikes has been finally canalized. A strong stand has been taken by the government against the occupation of factories. The rearmament program is becoming more and more rapid. Heavy industry gets fat orders. And the fall of the franc, following the tendency to export capital, assures profitable business to the banks. Only the middle layers of the population have suffered badly. It is hard to say which way they will move.

Thus for several months polemical violence has really been a veil for wariness in practice. The presence at the head of the government of Camille Chautemps, who is known as a clever conciliator, symbolizes the situation, which many would prefer to stay unchanged. It is probable that the government will experience some rude jolts in a short time. The financial difficulties and the fall of the franc, due to the emigration of capital, (more than 70 billion francs have been sent abroad) have given rise in government and employers' circles to an obstinate campaign for increased production to reduce purchases outside of the

country. Among the employers this propaganda was utilized to demand social peace, discipline in the factory, the restoration of full authority of the employers in the trades and even changes in the 40 hour law. The C.G.T. has admitted in principle the policy of increased production, but would like to get in exchange the regulation of hiring and firing, reducing in this domain the authority of the employers and introducing State control. The gravest fact is the rapid rise of domestic prices. We are threatened with a hard winter. The Matignon agreements which determine the present level of wages, expire in November. The workers will undoubtedly then ask for new wage tariffs. That alone can occasion a new strike crisis.

What will be the relation of the existing forces should such a crisis break forth?

The situation is not as favorable today for the workers as it was in 1936. The employers have organized themselves. The General Federation of French Production (*Confédération générale de la production française*) includes now, under its centralized guidance, most of the employers' associations. This organization has made an effort, with apparent success, to annex the mass of small employers and retail merchants. By levying on its membership a special tax of 1%, and in cases 4%, of the wages paid, the employers' federation has accumulated a fat "solidarity" fund, which will permit it to put over a wide lock-out if necessary. Thanks to Doriot's People's Party, and the rightist secret organizations, the Federation disposes of strike-breakers and strong arms capable of creating serious incidents.

In face of this might, the C.G.T. has its millions of members and some influential allies. It also suffers from serious weaknesses. Its moderation, its defensive tactics, its obvious ties with the government, have discouraged the most conscious elements in the workers' Federation. The most recent strike activity met with defeat (hotels, Paris slaughter-houses). And misgiving is spreading among the workers as a result of the attempts of the Communist Party to "colonize" the trade union organizations by installing its own men at posts of command. The workers will without doubt be unable to muster the same enthusiasm and unanimity that they showed in June 1936. Perhaps the "extremists" will get a chance to exert a real influence on the unions during the coming industrial conflicts. That will set loose in the unions a struggle of political tendencies, especially from the side of the bitterest enemies of the "extremists"—the Communists. It is hard to foresee the result of this battle. Much will depend on the final attitude of the government and the Parliament. In view of the fact that the government is at the mercy of financial worries and the Radical masters of the Senate, there is no doubt it will do the utmost to maintain the status quo and give satisfaction to the employers.

In light of the details presented above, I may be permitted to point to two contradictory aspects in the present social situation in France.

On one hand, we see a tendency to legal compromise between the workers and the employing class. On the other hand, we note persisting deep antagonisms and the threat of new clashes. The C.G.T. and the labor parties, now that they have become, for the first time, mass organizations, tend more and more to "reformism," to class collaboration and even to corporatism. But this provokes the formation of a new "extremist left," which may take shape in the new economic crisis. The situation is further complicated by the peril from outside the country.

Neither the right nor the left, neither the employers' nor the labor organizations, take a definite position in regards to the

"foreign danger." We may expect the most surprising alliance when war action is on the order of the day. The nationalist and bourgeois Right is divided. Its traditional foreign policy is unfriendliness to Germany, whom it considers "the hereditary enemy" of France. This attitude has not disappeared. A section of the reactionary elements remain essentially anti-German, and therefore want an understanding with the USSR (especially since the Communist Party of France has been converted to militarism and patriotism). They remain faithful to a line of diplomacy having as its principal aim the encircling of Germany by means of the French-Soviet pact. But another section of the nationalist-bourgeoisie has been seduced by Hitlerian fascism. They favor an understanding with Italy, and are somewhat disconcerted by the formation of the Berlin-Rome axis. They have, furthermore, no faith in Soviet Russia, viewing it still as the home of "world revolution" in spite of Stalinism. Such nationalist-bourgeois feel obliged to change their anti-German conception and to ask for reconciliation with Hitler.

Similar confusion exists in the Popular Front. Considered naively, the Front Populaire is "anti-fascist" and therefore hostile to Germany and Italy. The dominant note in this attitude is supplied by the Communist Party, which even tends to push the Italian question into the background, and in accordance with the Moscow line, has attempted to spread among the masses, by means of a wide publicity campaign, the idea that all evils in this world are due primarily to Hitler. A close accord of France with the so-called "pacific" nations, and especially with the USSR, is presented as the first condition of national salvation. But this conviction is not unanimous in the Popular Front. On one hand, there still survives among the French workers and peasants an anti-militarist, pacifist, current. It is now feeble but still keeps a certain importance, thanks to several organizations, the strongest of which is the National Union of Teachers (*Syndicat National des Instituteurs*), which has today a membership of 95,000. On the other hand, a number of S. P.'ers and Radicals do not relish the idea of a close alliance with Russia. They either doubt its military strength (the execution of Marshal Tukhachevsky and the other generals has left a bad impression), or they doubt the pacific intentions of Russia. The line of conduct of these people aims at an alliance of the three "democracies," that is, the collaboration of France with the United States and, especially, England. They know that British policy shows much reserve in regards to the USSR. To turn to London, as has been done by Blum, Chautemps and Delbos, is, therefore, to move away from Moscow and to collaborate, in the quest of peace, with Germany and Italy.

These contradictions have been brought to the top by the war in Spain. It is clear that for a year and a half the foreign policy of the French government has been in conformity with the policy of the British Foreign Office. As a result, Blum, for example, (backed by the majority of the S.P. and our pacifists) found himself in practical agreement with the British conservatives on the question of non-intervention in Spain, while he was opposed by a part of the C.G.T. and the Communists. This ambiguity has not disappeared and cannot disappear, being due to profound and lasting causes.

It is therefore hard to give a definite picture of the French foreign policy. Those who propose to lean on the fascist governments in order to combat communism are a weak minority. But neither have the people who want to perfect the French-Soviet alliance been able to impose their views on the country. The tendency of the government is to follow a mean line between

the two methods, which means, practically, to follow Great Britain. This has important repercussions in domestic politics. It explains above all the existence of a deep antagonism between the Communists on one side and the S.P.F. and Radicals on the other. Here is possibly the principal obstacle to the union of the Socialist and Communist Parties, which has been so often announced and is always being postponed.

At the same time that serious differences arise between the different parties, and inside them, on the question of national foreign policy, there is a spreading fear of war. The result of this is the almost general consent to measures of military security, which have always been combatted by many workers and the so-called revolutionary parties before. The anti-militarism, formerly strong in the French trade-unions, no longer exists there. The military expenses of France reach today a half of its entire budget and are constantly increasing. It is important to notice that the feeling of a foreign peril leads the elements making up the Front Populaire to renounce a part of their demands and to accept in advance a sort of "national discipline." Thus, the occupation of factories has disappeared because the Minister of War, Daladier, who is also the head of the Radical Party, threatened to resign if the stoppage in the metallurgical plants held up the execution of arms orders. Similarly when Blum was overthrown by the Senate, there was no serious protest. Blum himself had his party accept their entry into the Chautemps ministry, because, all of this, it was said, took place at a time of international tension and it was important to demonstrate the unity of the nation. A care of this sort leads perforce to attempts on the part of the avowed worker parties to suppress social conflicts. It is one of the factors (probably, the principal one) explaining the spirit of conciliation and resignation that has descended on the working people of France.

This analysis has only informative value. It excludes all consideration of personal judgement and political theory. However, if we were to risk a general conclusion, we might ask—comparing the France of today with England and Belgium—if the French labor movement has not arrived at a new stage in its history. One might wonder, if the French labor movement is not adopting the methods and viewpoints of "laborism." Like British laborism, it seems to be on the way to becoming a simple liberal opposition, integrated in "national unity," which it is careful not to jar. Revolutionary tendencies will probably arise in the form of new groups, the immediate task of which will be the development of new ideas of theory and action. Yet we must not forget that the situation may be accelerated, and changed, either by an economic crisis, or, which is more likely, by a great war craze and aggravated international tension.

INCLUSIONS AND OMISSIONS

In the next issue: *Labor Politics in Great Britain*.

Asiatic's article: *Impending Fascist Revolution in Japan* has reached us in a "mutilated shape." We are awaiting advice from the author.

J. Ayres' study of capitalism will be continued in the next issue.

The next number of the magazine will contain a series of reviews of recent books, including Berneri's last work.

The second chapter of Rudolf Sprenger's: *Social Elements of Bolshevism* will appear in the coming issue.

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ANDRE GIDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE U.S.S.R. * • E. L. Roof

UP TO the date of the publication of his *Return from the U.S.S.R.*, Gide was recognized as the dean of the communizing intellectuals in the West. His conversion to the movement of defence of Soviet Russia which now bears the name "communism" had been greeted with great joy by sovietists all over the world. Gide became the honorary patron-member of all the literary and intellectuals' organizations promoted by the national branches of the C.I. Gide, unable like so many intellectuals to see through the masquerade, was apparently quite genuine when he confused the national needs of the Soviet fascist State with the cause of world socialism. "Comrade of new Russia," he wrote in his dedication of *Les Nouvelles Nourritures* to the youth of the U.S.S.R., "you whom an immense effort, through blood and tears, has carried so far forward; you the representative of a people that has been for a long time suppressed, but has now passed us on the glorious road travelled by mankind, and where so many restive peoples would like to join you; you, thanks to whom my heart can swell with a new hope—it is to you that I have turned upon my completion of this little book, which I send you today as a fraternal message."

In the Summer of 1936 he was taken, in the company of five other literateurs, on a tour of Russia. The purpose was the usual publicity. The Russian publicity experts find the matter easy with most of their illustrious subjects: German-exile novelists and biographers, British lords and ladies, American politicians. Usually there is a more or less subtle financial phase in the lyrical praise that starts to gush from the famous tourist upon the completion of his trip of inspection. But now and then the tourist is too earnest, too perspicacious, or not cynical enough, and he reacts in the way Gide did.

His *Return* was really written at the insistence of his five voyage companions (especially the now dead Dabit), who chose Gide as their mouthpiece. Very diffidently, almost nervously, Gide expressed his misgiving—pained misgiving—at the condition and future of the working section of the population of the U.S.S.R. Considering Gide's personal commitments and the things he wrote in the past four years, it was a bold thing to do. He explains that the sale of his books in the Soviet Union was mounting to a stupendous size. More than 400,000 copies were sold in two months. He understood the bad effect a sudden change of this sort would have on the intellectuals in France, who are largely pro-Soviet. His little book was met with an avalanche of typical "bolshevik-leninist" vilification. The present *Retouches a Mon Retour de l'URSS* (*Afterthoughts On My Return from the USSR*) can be said to be an answer to what his former friends had to tell him upon the appearance of the first book. But in fact, it is only the less obscene of his critics that are answered in *Retouches*. For example, the entire bolshevik-communist press suddenly remembered that Gide was a "sexual pervert." Gide has not even a sentence for such dialecticians.

He wrote in *Retour* that he did not understand much about political-economic questions. He wrote that his reaction to a situation like that existing in the U.S.S.R. was rather "human," psychological. He must have permitted himself to read and think on the political-economic phase of the question since then.

**Retouches a Mon Retour de l'URSS*, by André Gide. Gallimard, Paris.

In the present work Gide goes as far as to suggest—very gently—his doubt of the “Marxism” peddled by the professors of Bolshevik communism. He even quotes Marx against his former mentors.

Addressing himself to his more intelligent critics, he says:

“The fruit is wormy. You accuse me of not seeing the apple the correct way—or of not liking apples.” And: “If I had limited myself to admiration, you would not have reproached me with superficiality.” (Page 9.)

He compares the present affair with a similar attack launched against him by all correctly visioned people when he published *My Voyage to the Congo*, in which he disclosed the condition of slavery forced on the natives of the Congo region by the concessionaire companies and the government officials serving the latter:

“I have already stated that as long as I travelled ‘accompanied,’ everything appeared marvellous to me. I did not begin to see clearly till after I decided to leave the governor’s auto and to go through the country by myself, on foot, and thus put myself, for six months, in direct contact with the natives.” (Page 13.)

If too much space in his *Return*, he explains, was devoted to the consideration of cultural questions, this was due largely to his former naive belief that culture could be discussed seriously in connection with the U.S.S.R.—and to the influence of his Soviet guides who shooed him, and his five companions, away from “worrying” about the “social question.” But liberty of thought and the question of justice are not merely literary questions, he thinks.

“Do they (his critics) really think that the recent Moscow and Novosibirsk trials make me regret I wrote the sentence that fills them with much indignation: ‘I doubt if in any country in the world, even in Hitler’s Germany, is the mind less free, less repressed, less fearful (terrorized), more vassalized?’” (Page 22.)

Considering the question of popular culture in the U.S.S.R., he has recourse to Soviet sources to show that the claims of increased popular education and the liquidation of analphabetism in Russia are largely official bluff. Indeed, he says, a sort of analphabetism has spread into the higher school and among the teachers themselves. Publicity makes up on paper for lacunae in fact.

He considers the Soviet claims of the economic emancipation of the working population. The Soviet worker, he notes, quoting Yvon, is a wage slave chained to the factory. “From the top to the bottom of the reformed social ladder, the best treated are the most servile, the most cowardly, those whose backs bend lowest, the vilest. They who dare to raise their heads are cut down one after another or deported . . . Soon there will remain of that heroic and admirable people, who are so deserving of our love, only executioners, profiteers and victims.” (Page 34.)

“The hunted, miserable being that the Soviet worker becomes as soon as he is no longer among the favored; the hungry, crushed, abused creature who never dares to protest—reinvents a God and seeks escape in prayer. Because to what that is human can he turn for help? Opium is for the despoiled.” Gide points to the Russian churches, which are crowded with the poor on holidays. (Pages 34-35.)

“But, at any rate, there no longer exists in the U.S.S.R. the exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few,” demurs the pro-Soviet apologist Grenier. And he and the other priests of a doctored, bolshevized Marxism recite out of their handbooks that while, as usual, the situation is bad for the working poor,

it is technically—according to a restuffed Marx and the embalmed Lenin—no longer marked by exploitation. (Page 37.)

“No longer to feel oneself exploited,” remarks Gide, “is of enormous importance. But to understand that you are exploited and not to know whom to blame for your misery, not to know whom to accuse!” (Page 43.) He agrees with Céline (the author of *Au bout de la nuit*, who also visited the U.S.S.R. and also escaped being roped by the Soviet publicity department) that we have here the perfection of horror. Gide quotes Yvon’s *What Has Become of the Russian Revolution* on the economic situation of the Russian worker.

The country is developing, says Gide, but “at whose expense and for whom?”

The masters of Russia are now symbolizing the accumulation of wealth in their country and the accompanying accumulation of the misery of the laboring people with a colossal Palace of Soviets (the defunct soviets, notes Gide).

“Think of it! A monument 415 metres in height (‘New Yorkers’, says my critic Pons, ‘will blanch with rage’) surmounted by a statue of Lenin, made of rust-proof steel, 70 to 80 metres high; a single finger of the statue measuring 10 metres in length. (The figures are provided by Pons. Let us hope the Lenin is seated.) Well, in that case, the workers will at least know why they are starving. They will have something to puff-up over. (But it will probably be the others who will be proud.) And the most curious thing is that the worker will be made to vote for the palace—you will see. Unanimously too. The Russian people will be asked what they prefer—better living conditions or the palace. And not one person will fail to answer: ‘Of course, the palace comes first.’ For every palace that I see rising in the capital, I see an entire country in hovels’, wrote Jean-Jacques (*Contract Social*, III, 13). The Soviet workers in hovels? Oh, no. Thanks to thee, o Stalin, they are penned up in dog holes.” (Pages 52-53.)

He touches on political enslavement of the Russian people. “Popular voting there, with the nominations made from above, can only be a joke, a farce, whether it is open or secret voting . . . Gagged, shackled, watched on all sides, the people find all resistance almost impossible.” (Page 45.)

He considers the multifarious, ravenous Soviet bureaucracy. He reminds Lenin’s deodorized ghost of the promises he made in his preelection brochure: *State and Revolution*. “. . . One wonders if Kautsky is not really having his revenge in Russia today. One wonders which of the two, Kautsky or Lenin, Stalin would imprison or shoot today.” (Page 47-48.)

And addressing the less ingenuous of his critics:

“It is the height of your bluff that makes so deep and painful the fall of my confidence, of my former admiration and joy. I reproach the U.S.S.R. not so much for not doing any better. (I am told at present that it could not do any better and I ought to understand this; I am told that the country emerged from a worse stage than I could ever imagine, and that the miserable conditions under which the workers vegetate at present would have been envied by the oppressed under the old régime. I believe there is a bit of exaggeration here.) I reproach the U.S.S.R. for having ‘taken us for a ride’ by presenting to us the situation of the workers over there as something enviable. And I reproach our own Communists at home (I am not speaking now of the duped comrades, but of those who know, or at least, should know) for lying to our workers, unconsciously or wittingly—and in the latter case for political reasons.” (Pages 29-30.)

"It is time for the Communist Party of France to want to open its eyes. It is time that they stop making it (the Party) lie. Or let the working people (of France) understand that they are duped by the Communists, just as the latter are duped by Moscow." (Pages 53-54.)

Retouches contains a number of amusing anecdotes from Gide's and his companions' notebooks. There is a significant excerpt from Gogol's Four Letters, supplied by the dead Dabit: "Nearly one hundred and fifty years have passed since the emperor Peter I has unscaled our eyes by introducing us to European culture and put all the means of action in our hands . . ." Since then "the Government has not ceased its activity, as is proved by entire volumes of regulations, decrees, ordinances: by a multitude of buildings, of books, of foundations of all sorts—scholarly, charitable, philanthropic, without counting those whose like is not to be found among the institutions of foreign governments." "Gide adds: 'If there is bluff here, it did not begin today.'" (Page 83.)

A woman member of their party talks to a beauty parlor attendant, at the hotel.

"How much do you make monthly?"

"One hundred and fifty roubles."

"Do you get lodging besides?"

"No. Nor food. They take off at least twenty roubles for my room."

"That leaves you 130 roubles. And what about food?"

"I can't get along with less than 200 roubles for food."

"Well, how do you do it?"

The girl smiles sadly: "Ah, madam, one manages somehow." (Page 86.)

Gide tells about the "domestic workers," house servants. He tells of a girl servant in a house next to his friend's, with whom he stayed in Moscow. She was thrown out of the house where she served when she was found to be in a "delicate" condition. We can imagine the usual "romance" that transpires between masters and servants, even when the latter are dubbed by the master class "domestic workers." The poor girl begged his friends not to destroy the garbage. She picked out the food she wanted.

Gide tells of meeting a wandering worker family in the fourth class of the railroad train. An anonymous note to the G.P.U. cast suspicion on the worker, the suspicion of "discontent." He lost his job and now spends his life, together with his family, scurrying crazedly over the country in quest of a chance to earn a living. (Page 93.)

"If all that we see in the U.S.S.R. appears to be joyful it is because anything that is not joyful becomes suspect. It is extremely dangerous to be sad or at least to appear to be sad. Siberia and not Russia is the place for those who complain." (Page 64.)

It has happened again and again that a former Western bolshevik-communist who fell out with the masters of Soviet Russia or their agents and underlings was driven, in reaction to the bitterness and particular obscenity of the resulting Sovietist attack, into the "rightist" and Fascist camps. Indeed, that is what the Soviet masters want. They can always gainsay the criticism of revolted followers by calling them fascist or by showing that they collaborate with the fascist rivals of the U.S.S.R. This danger cannot threaten the socialist propagandist, who is interested in tearing off the mask of socialist phraseology assumed by the perfected fascism prospering in the Soviet Union and that way wants to overcome one of the present barriers to the spread of socialist understanding.

Gide writes: "Fooling others in such grave questions is fooling oneself. For those whom you are fooling here are they whom you pretend to serve: the people. The people is served badly by having its eyes blinded." (Page 68.)

A Gide who understands this much will not be pushed into alliances with the Western fascists.

MARX AND THE STATE

• Martov

(See previous issue)

Much water has flowed under the bridges since then. In England, as in the United States, imperialism has forged the "military and bureaucratic State machine" the absence of which had constituted, as a general feature, the difference between the political evolution of the Anglo-Saxon countries and the general type of capitalist State. At the present time, it is permissible to doubt if these particular traits have been preserved even in the youngest Anglo-Saxon republics: Australia and New Zealand. "Today", remarks Lenin with justification, "both in England and in America the 'preliminary condition of any real people's revolution' is the break-up, the shattering of the 'available ready machinery of the State.'"

The theoretic possibility has not revealed itself in reality. But the sole fact that he admitted such a possibility shows us clearly Marx's opinion, leaving no room for arbitrary interpretation. What Marx designated as the "destruction of the State machine" in *Eighteenth Brumaire* and in his letter to Kugelmann was the destruction of the *military and bureaucratic apparatus* that the bourgeois democracy had inherited from the monarchy and perfected in the process of consolidation of the rule of the bourgeois class. There is nothing in Marx's reasoning that even suggests the destruction of the *State organization as such* and the replacement of the State during the revolutionary period, that is during the dictatorship of the proletariat, with a social bond formed on a *principle opposed to that of the State*. Marx and Engels foresaw such a substitution only in conclusion of a process of "a progressive withering away" of the State and all the functions of social coercion. They foresaw this atrophy of the State and the functions of social coercion as the result of the prolonged existence of the socialist régime.

It is not for nothing that Engels wrote in 1891, in his preface to *Civil War in France*:

"In reality, however, the State is nothing more than a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy whose *worse sides* the proletariat, just like the Commune, will have at the earliest possible moment to lop off, until such time as a new generation, reared under new and free social conditions, will be able to throw on the scrap-heap all the useless lumber of the State."

Isn't this clear enough? The proletariat lops off "the worst sides" of the democratic State (for example: the police, permanent army, the bureaucracy forming a separate entity, exaggerated centralization, etc.) But it does not suppress the democratic State as such. On the contrary, it creates the democratic State in order to have it replace the "military and bureaucratic State," which must be shattered.

"If there is anything about which there can be no doubt it is that our party and the working class can only gain supremacy under a political régime like the democratic republic. *The latter is, indeed, the specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as has been demonstrated by the French revolution.*"

That is how Engels expresses himself in his critique of the draft of the Erfurt program. He does not speak there of a "soviet" republic (the term was, of course, unknown), nor of a Commune-republic, in contrast to the "State." Neither does he speak of the "trade-union republic" imagined by Smith and Morrisson and by the French syndicalists. Clearly and explicitly, Engels speaks of the democratic republic, that is, of a State democratized from top to bottom, "an evil inherited by the proletariat."

This is so clear, so explicit, that when Lenin quotes these words, he finds it necessary to obscure their meaning.

"Engels," he says, "repeats here in a particularly emphatic form the fundamental idea which, like a red thread, runs throughout all Marx's work, viz., that the Democratic Republic *comes nearest*⁴ the dictatorship of the proletariat. For such a republic, without in the least setting aside the domination of capital, and, therefore, the oppression of the masses and the class struggle, inevitably leads to such an extension, intensification and development of that struggle that, as soon as the chance arises for satisfying the fundamental interests of the oppressed masses, this chance is realized inevitably and solely in the form the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the guidance of these masses by the proletariat."⁵

However, Engels does not speak of a political form that "comes nearest the dictatorship," as is interpreted by Lenin in his commentaries. He speaks of the only "specific" political form in which the *dictatorship can be realized*. According to Engels, the dictatorship is forged in the *democratic republic*. Lenin, on the other hand, sees democracy *merely* as the means of sharpening the class struggle and thus placing the proletariat before the problem of the dictatorship. For Lenin, the democratic republic finds its conclusion in the dictatorship of the proletariat, giving birth to the latter but destroying itself in the delivery. Engels, on the contrary, is of the opinion that when the proletariat has gained supremacy in the democratic republic and thus realized its dictatorship, *within the democratic republic*, it will consolidate, through that very act, the latter and invest it, for the first time, with a character that is genuinely, fundamentally and completely democratic. That is why in 1848, Engels and Marx identified "raising the proletariat to a ruling class" with "the conquest of democracy." That is why in *The Civil War*, Marx celebrated in the experience of the Commune the total triumph of the principles of people's power: universal franchise, electiveness and recall of all officials. That is why in 1891, in his preface to *The Civil War*, Engels wrote again:

"Against this transformation of the State and the organs of the State from the servants of society into masters of society—a process which had been inevitable in all previous States—the Commune made use of two infallible expedients. In the first place, it confided all administrative, judicial and educational functions to men chosen by universal suffrage, and it reserved to itself the right of recalling them at any time, upon the decision of their electors. In the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only by wages not surpassing the wages received by other categories of workers."

⁴The version found in one English edition is "the nearest jump-board to." Translator.

⁵State and Revolution, page 66, Chapter IV.

Thus, universal suffrage is an "infallible expedient" against the transformation of the State "from a servant of society into its masters." Thus, only the State conquered by the proletariat under the form of a republic that is basically democratic can be a real "servant of society."

Is it not plain that when he speaks this way and identifies, at the same time, *such* a democratic republic with the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, Engels is not employing the latter term to indicate a *form of government* but to designate the *social structure* of the State power? It was exactly this that was stressed by Kautsky in his *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* when he said that to Marx such a dictatorship was not a question "of a form of government but of its nature." An attempt at any other interpretation, leads perforce to the appearance of a flagrant contradiction between Marx's affirmation that the Paris Commune was an incarnation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the emphasis he laid on the total democracy established by the Paris Communards.

Lenin's text demonstrates that at the moment when he permitted himself to make contact with the viewpoint of the creators of scientific socialism, he rose above a simplistic conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and did not then reduce it to *dictatorial forms of organization of power* and did not then fasten on the term the meaning of a definite "political structure." In the quotation from *State and Revolution* reproduced above, Lenin puts an equals sign between "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "the guidance of these masses by the proletariat." The equation corresponds entirely to the conception held by Marx and Engels. It is exactly this way that Marx represented the dictatorship of the proletariat under the Paris Commune when he wrote "this was the first revolution in which the working class was openly acknowledged as the only class capable of social initiative, even by the great bulk of the Parisian middle-class—shop-keepers, tradesmen, merchants—the wealthy capitalists alone excepted." The voluntary acceptance by the great population of the hegemony of the working class engaged in the struggle against capitalism, forms the essential basis of the "political structure" that is called "dictatorship of the proletariat." Similarly, the voluntary acceptance by the popular masses of the hegemony of the bourgeoisie permits us to designate the political structure existing in France, England and the United States as the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." This dictatorship is not done away with when the bourgeoisie finds it worth while to offer to the peasants and the petty bourgeois, whom it directs, an appearance of sovereignty by granting them universal suffrage. Similarly, the dictatorship of the proletariat that Marx and Engels had in mind can only be realized on the basis of the sovereignty of all the people and, therefore, only on the basis of the widest possible application of universal suffrage.⁶

⁶In 1903, George Plekhanov declared, as is well known, that when the revolutionary proletariat has realized its dictatorship, it may find it necessary to deprive the bourgeoisie of all political rights (including the right to vote). However, to Plekhanov this was one of the possibilities, one of the contingencies, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In my pamphlet *The Struggle Against Martial Law within the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia*, I tried to interpret Plekhanov's words as presenting an example admissible only in logical abstraction and therefore used by him to illustrate the thesis: "The safety of the revolution is the supreme law and takes precedence over any other consideration." . . . In a private conversation with me, Plekhanov objected to my putting such an interpretation on his words. I understood then that his conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat was not free of a certain kinship with the Jacobin dictatorship by a revolutionary minority.

We are therefore obliged to arrive at the following conclusion when we consider the opinions of Marx and Engels on the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the democratic republic and on the "State that is an evil."

To Marx and Engels, the problem of the taking of political power by the proletariat is bound to the destruction of the bureaucratic-military machine, which rules the bourgeois State in spite of the existence of democratic parliamentarism.

To Marx and Engels, the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat is bound to the establishment of a State based on sincere and total democracy, on universal suffrage, on the widest local self-administration, and has, as its corollary, the existence of the effective hegemony of the proletariat over the majority of the population.

In that regard, Marx and Engels continue and extend the political tradition of the Mountain of 1793 and the Chartists of the O'Brien school.

It is true, however, that it is possible to discover in the works of Marx and Engels the traces of other ideas, which appear to offer ground to theses in which the *forms* and even the *institutions* that, embodying the political power of the proletariat, take on an essentially new character, opposed in principle to the forms and institutions that may embody the political power of the bourgeoisie, opposed in principle to the *State* as such.

These ideas belong to a special cycle and merit a separate study. We shall deal with them in the following chapter.

books

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. By M. Yvon. *International Review*, New York, N. Y.

REVIEWED BY INTEGER

IT IS especially important to understand the social character of the U.S.S.R. because of its socialist claims.

The great interest of non-Russians in the Soviet State sprang originally from the social connotations of the Russian Revolution. This interest increased — and at the same time changed its class complexion—with the stabilization of the Bolshevik régime. It took on an element of doubt in face of the present, apparently constant, succession of Moscow executions.

Immediately after October 1918, the Western labor parties that were affiliated with the Communist International "talked revolution." Whether this purpose was fulfilled consciously or unwittingly, the call for revolution in the West served as a means to defend the Russian Bolshevik government against foreign intervention. The neo-communist belief in the immediacy of a world revolution, to be modelled everywhere on the Petrograd coup of 1918, was countered by a wave of anti-Soviet vilification and exaggeration which swept along illustrious writers and very serious organs of public intelligence.

With the introduction of the first Five Year Plan—and with the first pangs of the great depression—the pro-Soviet viewpoint began to find a new instrument of expression. Authors that could not be called communist began to present in writing the panorama of a "Soviet paradise" in which the dreams of the traditional social reformer seemed already realized or about to reach incarnation. Little known literary folk attained prominence with volumes presenting seductive pictures of a more or less perfectly working society in Russia. Books dealing with the

wonders of the U.S.S.R. were devoured by the depression-hit intellectuals of the West. There came into being a distinct category of "pro-Soviet" authors. These specialists drank deep of the inspiring stuff provided them by the publicity bureaux of the Russian government and wrote accounts of a Soviet society that were filled with greater and greater enthusiasm and were more and more at variance with the truth of the situation.

These writers mistook appearances for reality and "paper" claims for facts. No more than the "pure communist" party writers of the early twenties did they try, or want to, unravel the problem of the historic significance of Russian Bolshevism. Just as the first had mistaken the Russians' attempt to deal with the breakdown of the national economic process for the introduction of communism, so did the new Western Sovietists mistake the Soviet program of the industrialization and modernization of that backward country for the construction of socialism. Much of the rhapsodic pro-Sovietism of the Western intellectuals was the result of the efforts of the incomparable publicity experts in the employ of the Russian State. But much of it was the work of the malicious demons of the depression. The scared Western intellectuals sought and found a Holy Land in the mysterious East. The old "revolutionary" communism seemed to be replaced with a different (no more critical) outlook—that of Intourism. And the latter was reinforced with a new social emotion, springing from the midst of the pre-war jockeying of the "good and bad" imperialist powers of the world—the "menace of fascism."

The first of the present series of Moscow trials and executions startled even the most rapt of the intellectual true-believers. There were apparently far-reaching social contradictions laboring under the satin surface of Intourist Russia.

In his plain-spoken *Letter to Moscow* (see November 1936 issue of the *International Review*), Ignazio Silone diagnoses the mental malady afflicting our Intourist Sovietists as "juridical cretinism."

"Juridical cretinism," writes Silone, "consists especially of the habit of considering the laws of a country as the exact representation of the social relations obtaining among the citizens of that country. It is this juridical cretinism that explains, for example, the mental debility of those intellectuals who go to Italy, study the country's Fascist laws and come home convinced that there is no longer any capitalism in Italy, since it was supposedly abolished there by the Fascist laws. And should such a traveller happen to go to France, he would return as deeply convinced that the ideals of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' form the basis of the social relations obtaining in France, since those are the solemn words he would see on all government stationery, on all courthouses, on all school buildings and over all public comfort stations.

"Socialist criticism, from the time of its foundation by Marx and Engels, has warned us against this disease of juridical cretinism. Socialists have always criticized formal democracy, abstract freedom, equality on paper. Socialists have always said that one cannot judge a country by its laws but only by the real social relationship existing among human beings. Emil Ludwig, Lion Feuchtwanger and Jacob Buehrer go into raptures over the new Soviet Constitution. (Too much must not be expected from literary folk.) But no socialist worker, inoculated with Marxist understanding and thus made immune to juridical cretinism, will place any faith in the abstract paragraphs of the Soviet Constitution. In view of the August slaughter, he will ask: 'What has become of the Russian Revolution? What are

the objective reasons for this aggravation of the inner contradictions in the Soviet Union?"

And these precisely are the questions that Yvon answers in his surprising booklet.

It is not the product of a professional writer. Yvon is a worker. He went back to the bench upon his return to France, after spending eleven years in the U.S.S.R. where as a simple laborer, then as a manager, and as a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he contributed his bit to the functioning of the Soviet social pyramid.

Especially because his chief criterion is invariably the consideration of the workers' material interests, Yvon is able to cut clean through the ideologies that have enmeshed so many academicians who have attempted to deal with the Soviet "experiment." Yvon pierces through the appearances of things because he always thinks as a class-conscious worker. Methodically, using simple language, he describes the conditions under which the Russian worker acts as a political person, rests and eats, labors. His account is not built on suppositions and wishes. He supports his first-hand observation with evidence drawn from incontrovertible official Soviet sources. Yet this lucid record is not merely the record of things observed and the restatement of official statistics. Yvon is ever asking himself: "What of the workers' immediate and future interests?"

His interpretation appears to challenge us on one point.

"The workers," he writes, "do not necessarily have a world to gain and their chains to lose. There are heavier chains they can forge for themselves. The end of capitalism can quite easily give birth to an economy that is directed by a new class living on profit. It does not necessarily have to lead to the free association of workers . . . The Russian Revolution has shown us the possibility of such a society. It has produced the embryo of a society that we must oppose."

It is really of secondary importance to the workers' movement for socialism if, in the case of Soviet Russia, we are not dealing with the "classic" capitalist economy (typified by 19th century capitalism) but with an economy that seems more akin to the "industrial feudalism" sketched by Hilferding as the General Cartel in his *Finance Capital*. Whether capitalism has been abolished in Russia and replaced with a new, non-capitalist exploitation economy is another question.

Basing ourselves on Marx's analysis of the capitalism of his day, we recognize the following as the "classic" conditions of capitalist economy:

1. Commodity production.
2. Monopoly by non-producers of the means of production.
3. The existence of a class which owns no means of production and is, therefore, obliged to sell its labor power to the non-producers in control of the means of production.
4. The production by wage workers of a surplus value, over and above the value of their wages. This surplus value appears usually in the form of industrial and commercial profits, dividends, interest, ground rent, State taxes, royalties, "wages of superintendence" (paid as salaries to directors and managers), the salaries of all those employed at occupations that are not productive of use-values, the salaries of the members of the army and police, the salaries of public officials, church employees, publicists, commercial aids, etc. Any one of these forms of surplus value may become more important than the rest. Any one of them may disappear altogether as a method of appropriating the surplus product of the workers.

It is only on the apparent absence of the first condition that the apologists for the Soviet exploitation economy can hope to base their claim that capitalism has been abolished in Russia. "Competition is dead within the U.S.S.R. There is no class of individual capitalists selling and buying from each other, competing with one another, within the confines of the Soviet Union." This incantation, intoned by the Soviet "Marxist" priests as they cast their spell over the confused and scared masses of Soviet Russia, is repeated even by some people who recognize the exploitation practiced by their masters on the laboring population of Russia.

But they who find in the apparent absence of competition within Russia a sign of the abolition of capitalism forget that what makes capitalist economy *capitalist* is precisely its mode of production.

Russia we are told is economically like Ford's general enterprise. The various component plants deal with one another—not on the commercial exchange basis, but as different departments of one concern.

However, the internal social organization they recognize as non-capitalist is that which is found within every capitalist factory, within every trust.

The U.S.S.R. is a badly, loosely run trust of trusts, competing on the world market against all other capitalists and carrying on a relation of exchange — under the monopolist conditions dictated by the masters of Soviet production—with the peasant millions of Russia. The Soviet State, representing the privileged interests of the non-productive social strata of Russia (the officials, managers, army, police, writers, actors, publicists, Party functionaries, etc.), is the single national capitalist. ("Capitalist" is an economic unit.) "The category 'capitalist' has itself become a social category. It has become 'socialized'—within the framework of capitalist society." The Soviet State runs the national enterprise in the interests of all the parasites—the non-producers—who, in Russia and abroad, live, in small part or largely, on the surplus value (officials' salaries, "wages of superintendence," royalties, etc., etc.) produced by the wage-slaves laboring in the all-inclusive national enterprise.

The national capitalist carries on a class struggle:

1. Against its own wage slaves. As in Nazi Germany, the State employer forbids the workers to change a job without permission. It dictates wage tariffs to the workers. It contravenes any attempt at opposition on the part of the workers by forcing them into its State "company" unions and by holding over their heads the threat of the armed forces and its "company" police. It drives and sweats the workers by means of the system of piece work and bonus premiums.
2. Against the precapitalist producers of Russia: the peasants and artisans. The State capitalist expropriates the latter through arbitrary monopolistic exchange of goods, in which it—the sole manufacturer, with the machinery of a State at its disposal—sets prices, "selling dear and buying cheap." It expropriates them through heavy taxation, as was and is done by the capitalist State everywhere else, but not in such a high-handed, brutal manner. When the peasants attempt to combat the monopolist capitalist by calling a "farmers' holiday," the State capitalist "collectivizes" them. That is, it puts them into a situation where the peasant must depend entirely on the State capitalist for their seeds, implements and soil to be tilled.
3. Against rival foreign capitalists in the arena of the world market. This entails the usual struggle over markets (or in the defence of "one's own patch") and strategic positions, with con-

sequent huge armament, international diplomatic intrigue, the quest of alliances and preparation for the coming world conflict.

The worthies that run the Russian national trust of trusts are interested in increasing the productivity of the Russian workers. What capitalist does not want that? Greater productivity means a better life for the various Soviet eaters of surplus value, who are just emerging from the lean years that followed the War and Revolution, when the economic process of Russia was almost totally disorganized. The most responsible of the Russian masters do not approve of the great waste that is common in Russian industry. They compete for influence and domination among themselves, with the resulting exile, imprisonment and executions of the losers in this internal conflict.

The monopolistic capitalism we know in the United States today is unlike the "classic" capitalism of the 19th century which was analyzed by Marx in his *Capital*. But it is capitalism. Neither is the State-monopolist capitalism of Soviet Russia anything but capitalism. Fundamentally the great difference between the complete Russian State capitalism and the modified State capitalism of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy is the fact that the bureaucracy holding power, and living on the "fat of the land" in the latter two "non-capitalist" countries avoid the inefficiency and waste of the Russian "trust of trusts" by permitting and taking advantage of the "initiative" of the old entrepreneurs, who are really no longer full masters in their enterprises.

The reformist philistines of the 90's liked to refer to the bits of Statized monopoly they knew in their time as "State socialism." We use a more truthful term: State capitalism. Socialism is the scientific term for social ownership—ownership by society. We shall get socialism—the social ownership of the means of production and distribution—in the measure that the latter are controlled (socially, and democratically) by the laborers themselves; that is, in the measure that the control of the conditions of production by the non-productive eaters of surplus value disappears. We shall get socialism in the measure that the social totality of labor becomes necessary labor for the satisfaction of the needs (immediate and future) of the whole of society. We shall get socialism in the measure that the non-producers, whatever name they attach to themselves and whatever grand social functions they claim for themselves, stop living on the product of the workers surplus labor. We shall get socialism in the measure that the four basic conditions of capitalism mentioned above are done away with.

"It is always the direct relation of the owners of the conditions of production to the direct producers," wrote Marx, "which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden foundation of the entire social construction, and with it of the political form of the relations between sovereignty and dependence, in short of the corresponding form of the State." (*Capital*, vol. III, Chapter 47, p. 919, Kerr ed.)

Yvon helps us to uncover the relation existing between the masters of the conditions of Soviet production and the Soviet laboring masses, the direct producers.

The socialist claims of the Soviet State enable it to wield an important section of the politically interested workers of the world in the service of its national capitalist interests. The socialist claims of the Soviet State are used by the capitalist apologists all over the world to defend capitalism and discredit the movement for socialism. They point to the State-monopolist slavery of the workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R. and say: "There you have your socialism."

In so far as Yvon's study helps us to dispel this deception, it is an instrument of our emancipation.

Popularize Yvon's pamphlet.

The course of the Russian Revolution teaches us two important lessons:

1. In the period of matured world capitalism, the promise and hope of the immediate institution of socialism in a backward country may be used (in part consciously, in part without understanding its own historic role) by a party of national reform as a means of enlisting the propertyless and small-propertyed to die and suffer in a cause that does not immediately concern the latter: the solution of the historic backwardness of the fatherland.
2. The emancipation of the working people can only be their own creation. Otherwise, what is dressed up in the language of socialist emancipation is merely a change of masters.

THE WHITE SAHIBS IN INDIA. By Reginald Reynolds. Secker and Warburg, London.

THE expropriation of the peasants, the mass transformation of the means of production and labor power into capital was accomplished by the process of primitive accumulation in Europe since the 16th century. This expropriation is continued today in the colonial countries. Immense stretches are in the hands of peoples who do not practice exchange or whose social structures excludes the sale of the riches they possess — the land with its mineral, plant and animal wealth. To possess itself of this natural wealth, capitalism must carry on the systematic destruction of the social formations that oppose its robbery.

This action of capitalism could not be limited to normal commerce with the background regions of the earth, to pacific penetration. Accumulation is characterized historically by expansion by leaps and bounds. It cannot wait for the slow decomposition of natural economy. Its manner of expansion does not enable capitalism to rely on the natural increase of the worker population or wait for the slow transformation of the primitive social groups to a merchant economy. It must use violence. As a result we have the military occupation of colonial countries, native uprisings and new expeditions to suppress such uprisings. For to the primitive social groups it is a question of life or death. They are obliged to keep up the struggle till they are exhausted or exterminated.

The story of the British occupation and domination of India illustrates what happens when capitalism invades less advanced social structures.

India knew invasions before the British occupation: the Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Afgans, Mongols. None of the conquerors interfered with the traditional structure of the Hindoo peasant population. None of the conquerors tried to destroy the native social organization of the Hindoo people and deprive it of its productive forces. They limited themselves to the levies of tribute and to taxes. In a brief period the British accomplished what their predecessors failed to do in centuries. British capitalism tore away from the Hindoo peasant community the basis of its existence—the land.

As common property, the land was inalienable. The European conquerors pretended the land was the property of the native rulers and the tax collectors. The British transferred the "legal" title of the land to the Grand Mogul and his subordinates. Then they took India to themselves as the "lawful" successors of the Mogul. Learned British jurists proved the land had to belong to "somebody" and therefore to the supreme ruler. Heavy taxation was imposed on the peasants to make them sell the

common land. The spread of commerce, monstrous usury under the protection of the new laws, completed the expropriation of the Hindoo peasantry. Industrialization followed the development of the market. A native capitalist class made its appearance. Today the latter is strong enough to demand "India for the Hindoos." The needs of the new Hindoo bourgeoisie finds expression in the Nationalist movement and the All-India Congress. A bolder, more aggressive section of this movement takes the name of the "Congress Socialist Party." Reginald Reynolds' book describes — rather than analyses — "British imperialism in India from the days of John Company (India Company) to date" and pastes on to a detailed and vivid description the viewpoint of the nationalist "Congress Socialist Party." The pretense of socialism (the typical swindle of the social-democratic politicians) is a goad of the capitalist emancipation of a backward country. The real lineup is of course not *India versus Great Britain* but *the exploited of India and Great Britain versus their exploiters*. The Leninist doctrine of "national liberation" is a fine instrument with which to confuse the issue. And this confusion is peddled by Reynolds.

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